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THE WESLEYAN



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROSE

A Letter from the Editor	1
("Hey, Teach!")	
He Flies the Jets — Ann Bell	2
("... Someday the minutes will all be gone . . .")	
It Makes You Wonder — Pont Riley	4
("When's the next resurrection?")	
Why Rat Week — "B"	8
("... Just like so many rats.")	
Who Killed Dr. Gin — Betsy Hopkins	11
("I could kill that man!")	
Her Name Was Betsy Hopkins — Pont Riley	13
("... The quality that makes a writer.")	
Jazz-Beat — Bettie Wilson	17
("... The devil take the hindmost.")	
The Tracks — Helen Poole	21
("A thin rain started to sift down . . .")	
Yo Recuerdo Siempre . . . I'll Remember Always—Luleen Sandefur	24
("I'll never forget, Dana . . .")	
A New Year — Carmen Moore	26
("It will be different this year.")	
Night — Jane Powers	28
("... We remembered that magic night.")	
Matilda Was a People — Charlye Wiggins	30
("She thought she was Cleopatra reincarnated . . .")	
Pontifically Speaking — Pont Riley	34
("Anyway — where was I?")	

POETRY

The City Man — Charlye Wiggins	3
Recollections in Autumn on Thoughts of Spring —	6
Mary Ann Taylor	
Autumn Leaves — Jane Howard	7
If I Should Die — Polly Rodieck	9
Star Rise — Manita Bond	9
Metamorphosis into Shadows — Mary Ann Taylor	10
Sunrise Over Grand Canyon — Manita Bond	12
Autumn — Marcia Kelly	15
Dust — Ann Bell	15
A Child's Secret — Charlye Wiggins	22
When the Curtain Falls — Harriet Hope	23
Fall: Here and There — Pont Riley	25
After Forest Fire — Polly Rodieck	33
Autumn as Seen Beside Foster Lake — Claire Hammond	33

A Letter From The Editor

Dear College Family,

Fall is a time for splashes of brilliant color, for cool, snappy air, for the excitement of getting off to college (or getting back to the campus,) for Saturday afternoon football games, for burying oneself in the books again, and it is also a time for Practice Teaching!

Yes, friends, there are a few of us who, due to circumstances, will not be with you until after Thanksgiving. But we want you to know we are Senior Tri-K's at heart. It's just that we must adopt a professional attitude for a while and neglect you while we learn the fine art of educating the younger generation.

The younger generation?! Some of them aren't so young. Yours truly, for instance, is confronted daily by over a hundred high school seniors. A few of my friends on the teaching staff really made me feel "fine" the first day I was there by saying "Why, you look like a high school student yourself!" Oh, dear.

Another "first day" incident is told by a few of the music practice teachers. It seems their supervising teacher thought they were members of the Glee Club and she couldn't understand why there weren't enough chairs for everyone after she had counted them out so carefully.

Of course we were introduced to the classes as "Miss _____", but a number of our students have seen or read "Blackboard Jungle," and we are addressed "Hey, Teach!" as often as not.

There are all sorts of little discipline problems. The other day, I heard a young high school teacher tell what she did in a certain situation and only a couple of days later I had an opportunity to try her method. One of my boy students, who more than anything else wanted attention, asked right out loud in the middle of class "Will you go to the football game with me tonight?" I looked up at him with mock concern, "Do you need a chaperon, Bobby?"

Those of us teaching on the elementary level have a little different type problems. What would you do if a little fellow stuck a pencil up his nose and bled all over you as you came to the rescue? It happens every day—or at least something just as trying does.

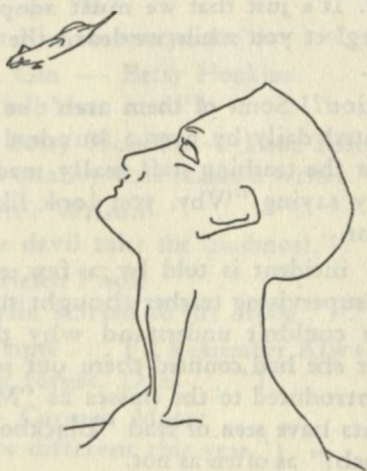
All of us who are students have always thought teachers "have it easy," haven't we? Well, viewing the situation from the other direction, we've changed our minds. After grading over a hundred papers for one day's work, going to meetings, meetings, MEETINGS! and preparing for classes like we've never before prepared for classes—we'll be glad to get back to campus and be just plain students once more. Yes ma'am, we will.

But, wait a minute, before I go, there are compensations—we are in a whole new world and it's actually exciting! When our students show us that they like us and respond to what we try to teach—it's a mighty good feeling.

Bye, gals. See you at Homecoming. The Editor

He Flies The Jets

By ANN BELL



Sometimes at night he falls asleep with his head in my lap. He is so thin and tired. I like to let him rest, for he so seldom can.

But always come the dreams of those streaking, silver planes he loves so much, but also hates and fears. His hands grope wildly for controls that are not there; his feet search for petals. And he cries out for help and for me. To see him thus is a knife constantly turned in my heart.

I talk softly in his ear, and somehow, he seems to hear me. He finds my hands and holds them tightly. Then he is peaceful, dreaming the dreams we so often dream together. He relaxes; peace has come.

But then he cries, "I'll die first; I'll die!"

And so it is each time he sleeps: terror then peace, terror then peace. And when he wakes, he holds me so tightly and sometimes cries.

So it is with those of us who know some day the minutes will all be gone, that the silver, streaking bird will fly no more.

The City Man

By CHARLYE WIGGINS

*A man's an orphan in the city,
nurtured on proud steel that arches blue in the noonday sun,
the lusty cries of brown, strong-sinewed men
who toil with steel and raise a city from the sun-warmed dust with
sweat and curses.*

*A city . . . the stone-grey jungle wherein a man is not a man . . .
but a part of brick, of mortar, and of the living network of garish
lights that throb with the pulse of a too-bright neon heart.*

*He looks for corners to stand upon . . . cold, grey corners . . .
to feel the raw city wind blow filth against his face from the gutter's
womb.*

*He looks for walls to lean against . . . doors to enter, and exit again
into the city streets.*

*He searches every window for a face and finds only his own, hungered
and lean . . . then looks away*

*with an unknown terror gripping at his throat
and filling every limb with a pasty fear.*

*But he does not speak, nor shout, nor curse . . .
nor even acknowledge that this, yea, this is loneliness . . .
he is too proud.*

*Yea . . . He is Man . . . the creator, the builder, the toiler, the curser,
the father, the skinny suckling child that pulls at the city's breast.*

*Yet each is alone . . . alone with his own aloneness and himself . . .
orphaned by his own . . . cold stone and steel . . .*

*barred by angular girders that blaze rough orange against a paler sun . . .
by windows . . . a thousand windows mirroring his glance . . . squares
of sidewalk, hard against his heel . . .*

and new walls of salmon pink that rise straight up against a line of sky.

And so he reaches out in an instant . . . beyond his own . . .

beyond the squeal of brakes that lash the summer air . . .

*beyond the cold green blocks of sunlight that somehow reach the city
streets . . .*

*he reaches out, yea, even beyond himself and finds fire in another
man's eyes.*

*It happens anywhere when man and man come together . . .
as flint struck on flint bears a spark to darkness.*

*It happens on a corner in the rain, under a white-hot noonday sun,
beside the hoarse, brash cries of the lanky newsboy with his shock
of yellow hair,*

*or in a cubicle of crowded space aboard a bus . . .
man reaches out to man.*

It Makes You Wonder

By PONT RILEY

There's a definite distinction between a well-behaved traveler and a "dude." After meeting both species of tourist every day for three months in Yellowstone Park, I consider myself extremely well qualified to testify on the characteristics of both. However, it is really very simple—a well-behaved traveler isn't what a dude is! And just what is a dude? My friend, the purpose of this little slip of the pen is to try to explain the creature.

First of all, there are two types of dudes—those who know anything about everything and those who sometimes make you wonder how they had the intelligence to slip away from their nurse. But believe me, the latter—if I had to make a choice—is infinitely more desirable.

The first type—Mr. Know-it-all—is one of the most exasperating creatures alive. If he should ask you for information it is practically impossible to answer him before he shouts, "I know that; just answer my question." Naturally since I worked at Old Faithful, one of the most frequent questions was: "When will Old Faithful play again?" Patiently I would take a deep breath and begin: "I'm sorry, sir, I'm not sure when the next eruption will be because I don't know when the last one occurred." Nine times out of ten—if my questioner were Mr. Know-it-all—I never got past the first two words before I heard this: "Young lady, I was told that Old Faithful erupts every hour on the hour, and you're trying to tell me you don't even know what time it is." Then he'd go away furious—muttering about the stupid people working in the Park. He certainly would have been surprised to learn that Old Faithful is not nearly as regular as some of the smaller geysers in the Park!

Mr. Know-it-all also has to learn the hard way about the bears. Every person who enters the Park is warned about the bears and asked to observe the regulation which forbids their being fed. However, it is the exception when that rule is observed, and the bears are faithfully fed.

I checked out groceries several weeks this past summer, and I'd hate to estimate how many people asked for bear food. When I told them about the regulations, they got furious, threatened to write their Congressmen, and told me I knew absolutely nothing about Yellowstone Park.

Perhaps I ought to mention now that the reason the feeding of bears is prohibited is largely for the protection of the tourists. The animals are wild and easily angered. Frequently they have seriously injured people who have annoyed them. Also the food people throw the bears is not good for them, and if they do not eat the proper food, they die of starvation during the winter when they hibernate.

Another annoying habit of the dude is his destructive nature. The dude loves to destroy natural wonders by carving his initials on geyserite or throwing pennies in the beautiful hot pools. It is reported that one dude was stopped just in time from sticking a log down the vent in Old Faithful's cone. He wanted to see what would happen when it got ready to erupt! Some people!

Then we have the dude who really makes you wonder. He knows absolutely nothing, or so it seems; and the questions he asks are unbelievably stupid. He can also become quite confused—either about the information you try to give him or about the terms he uses. This, for example, is a typical conversation:

"Where's Old Faithful?"

"Go to the corner, and it's across the main road."

"I looked over there, but I didn't see it."

"Perhaps it just wasn't playing—although there are signs. . ."

"You mean it doesn't play all the time?"

"No, approximately every 64½ minutes."

"Not every hour on the hour?"

"No."

"Then why is it called Old Faithful when it's not regular?"

And so it goes—*ad nauseum*.

I never will forget the way I felt when I was asked, "When will the geyser (pronounced "geeser") corrupt?" I could hardly keep a straight face. Then there was a man who wanted to know when the next "resurrection" was going to be. With presence of mind which surprised me, I replied, "No man knows the time or the place." The dude looked at me as if I were crazy. They somehow get the idea that every employee in the Park is a ranger-naturalist.

Perhaps I'm being unduly critical or impatient. Perhaps I'm not giving the great American public credit for its admirable qualities. But every so often you meet people who are really amazing. There's always the one person who corresponds to the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. For me the crowning blow came the time a dude came up to me and asked in all seriousness, "How do you get to Yellowstone Park from here?"

Yes, sir, it really makes you wonder!

Recollections in Autumn on Thoughts of Spring

*The woods were newly green
And filled with gold from sun.
And I walked down the paths*

—Not hearing small things flee as I walked by.

—Not seeing how each leaf was separate against the sky.

*—Not noticing shy miracles too insignificant to catch
my eye.*

Not caring

Not loving

For I was thinking of the changing things

That I forever tried to keep unchanged;

That I groped wildly toward, and grasped

And held, and thought that I could always hold.

Each time

They slipped away

or struggled away

or tore themselves away.

The changing things. Always they

Were loved too much to let leave

Gracefully.

Young hours

Fly by,

Turn weary,

Grow old.

Warmth of love

Quite suddenly

Grows cold.

And hopeful dreams

For lesser things

Are sold.

Youth, love, and hope . . .

I cannot, cannot hold,

Though I would try and try.

*(Though I would tear my
heart apart to hold.)*

And thus I wandered through the woods,

Too much concerned with smaller me

To realize that I was stumbling through unchanged eternity.

*I do not know exactly why
I happened to look up and see the sky.*

(It was a flawless blue, I noticed;

And wet, brown trees stretched up

and touched the sky with green-gold arms) . . .

The peace came painfully.

One by one I let go of the things that tortured me.

Each time I had to hear,

"This does not matter.

This is insincere."

Finally, finally peace came ringing in.

And I knew.

I said it to myself again, again . . .

"My assurance, my security is here

The woods will be the same

sun-golden green and brown . . .

next year."

—Mary Ann Taylor

Autumn Leaves

*What beautiful patterns you make,
As I walk along beneath the trees,
And see your shadows on the ground,
An oak, or elm or maple,
A poplar or pine.*

*What beautiful sounds you make,
As I hear the breeze through the trees,
And smell the aroma of dried pine,
Red or yellow or orange leaves,
Green or black or brown.*

*What a soft warm bed you make,
As I lie down beneath a tree,
To think of Autumn's gift,
Of love, of joy, of peace,
Of beauty, of leaves.*

By Jane Howard

Why Rat Week?

Dirty looks, drums in the night, screaming voices, terrified freshmen, ridiculous costumes—it's all a part of rat week. It's a week of strain and of pressure. It's a long week and a hard week. Freshmen lose their sleep, and sophomores lose their voices. But just the same it goes on. Why?

When freshmen come to college, they come from all over the country. They come as individuals with separate aims and separate desires. Unsure of themselves, they find one or two good friends on their floor, and they stick together all the time. Sometimes there is even a feeling of competition between the floors of a dorm.

The freshmen look toward the upper classmen, and each class has a unity and "togetherness" that they, too, want, but are at a loss as to the "how" of acquiring this spirit.

Then they suddenly find that the sophomores who, yesterday, were smiling at them, helping them with their studies and being their general "good buddies" now yell and glare at them and just treat them like so many rats. They know that as individuals they cannot do anything about this, and that there is strength in numbers; so they band together. They go places in groups, and they meet together to sing or cheer. And in so doing, they learn each other's names, faces, and natures. It's such a nice discovery to find that the tall blonde on another floor isn't conceited at all but is lots of fun, and that the book-worm in the other dorm is really full of wit and spirit.

And while the freshmen are busily studying last year's annual to find the names of all the High and Mighty Sophomores, the sophomores are busily asking other sophomores who is that freshman taking it in such a good spirit. The upperclassmen stand in the background, but they watch closely. They notice the freshmen, who the leaders in their class are, and how the class as a whole is responding and uniting. And soon not only do the freshmen know all the sophomores and the sophomores, the freshmen, but the upperclassmen have learned the freshmen, too.

And so the week passes slowly, slowly by. The freshmen are beginning to wonder if the sophomores thrive on diets of green persimmons and the sophomores are wondering if they can frown another minute. But as suddenly as the week began, it ends, and the sophomores once again return to the land of the civilized. The feeling that comes with having the meanest sophomore come up and hug you and congratulate you for your class spirit and with seeing the sophomore class dressed in *your* colors is indescribable. You think back over the week—of the new friends you made and the unity your class acquired, and you realize the *why* of rat week.

"B"

If I Should Die

*If I should die upon this day, I know
My life would be an uncompleted thing.
I would not see again the satin of the crow,
Nor yet the arc cut by a gull's white wing.
I would not live to view the bronze-red sun
Rise on the day two thousand earthly years
From our Lord's birth. So many things not done . . .
I shall not taste the apple's salty tears,
Nor stand upon a solid granite stone
And feel a hurricane's torrential force,
Nor, on a gusty day with soul windblown,
Trace a golden river to its source.
But sometimes I think that death would have its worth . . .
To leave all caves, and lie enbosomed in the earth.*

—Polly Rodieck.

Star Rise

*A single star rides up at dusk
Into the heavens high,
And halts between my curtains there
And lights my patch of sky.
With swirling stripes of sunset gone,
And Lady Moon still sleeping . . .
With all the other stars yet hid,
A lonely watch you're keeping.
But solitude is not unkind . . .
For sure as heaven's thine;
As sure as summer follows spring
Your sister stars will shine.
Now in the crowded, freckled sky
I see you from afar,
But only while you're there alone
Are you the wishing star.*

—Manita Bond

Metamorphis Into Shadows

Beowulf

I looked into the darkness,

*Into the strange and shadowed darkness,
And I felt the murky, shadowed shame
Pushing, pushing its way into reality.*

And the child in me cried,

"... This is not real. This is not life.

Life should be defined as light,

Blinding light,

Warmth and good noise,

An airy thing that reaches toward the sky . . ."

*But even then I knew the voice that answered me,
the voice of the shadows.*

... "I, too, am life," it said.

Though I am grotesque and unreal,

Yet I, too, am life.

I creep forward and laugh and laugh.

*I come with a terrible taunting grin
smelling of musty, damp cellars.*

I mimic you and chant, 'Fool! Fool!'

I humiliate you,

and then laugh 'Shame!'

I will hold up your conceits and make them ludicrous.

I will come—and you will fear . . ."

The voice, ingratiating, insinuating, taunting.

"... I too am life.

And after light you have forgotten,

You will remember me,

You will remember me . . ."

And the child in me cried.

—Mary Ann Taylor

Who Killed Dr. Gin?

By BETSY HOPKINS

The mangled body of Dr. George Warren Gignilliat, noted English professor at Wesleyan College was discovered on the steps of the Candler Memorial library early this morning. Obviously the victim of a brutal ax murder. Gignilliat was found under the pieces of his famed brief case, with a Shakespeare book placed at his head in the manner of a tomb stone.

The body was discovered at 6:00 a. m. by policeman Patrick O'Brien who is quoted as saying, "Sure 'an the body looked like a jig-saw puzzle."

Macon police have rounded up some 450 suspects, mainly Wesleyan students, who are believed to have sufficient motives for killing the famed professor. 390 of these suspects have actually been heard to say, "I could kill that man."

Police, baffled by the unprecedented number of suspects and valid motives, are well into the herculean task of sifting the evidence. Although this paper is not at liberty to disclose any names at present, six people are now being held on suspect of murder.

One of the suspects, a prominent member of Gignilliat's Shakespeare class, is quoted as saying, "There're a lot of things I could kill him for, but the kiss-off was giving a Shakespeare test on the day of both Florida and Georgia Homecomings."

"Ay, de bum don't like nothin' I write. He ain't got no taste, no appreciation for de arts, no intellect. He stinks," said another prominent suspect and a student in Gignilliat's freshman English class.

Among the chief suspects is Gignilliat's wife, Mrs. Annie Gignilliat, who issued the following statement:

For two years I've stood it—when he 'and er'ed'; when he cleared his throat; when he wrecked the car and blamed it on a fast moving truck; when he brought 200 students over for his annual tea; all that I could take. But when he said his only trouble was that he was Annie-mate, I gave up. I could have killed him."

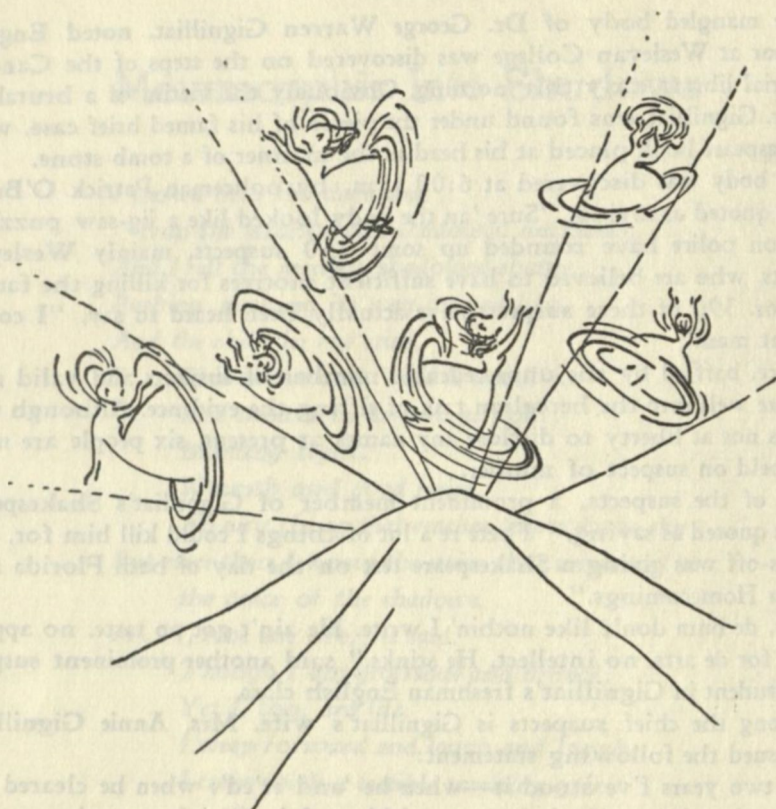
"He gave mythology tests on Mondays; ain't that enough," read a statement issued by a member of Gignilliat's sophomore lit class.

However, disregarding these statements as routine, police are now centering their attention on another suspect who was rounded up a few hours ago. Garbed mysteriously in a white sheet and of a somewhat ethereal complexion, he gave his name as Hamlet. For many hours the police questioned him, receiving no reply other than a mumbled, "Angels and ministers of grace, defend us."

Finally however, utilizing a lie detector, the following statement was obtained. "Forsooth," declared the sheeted form, "for twenty years he's murdered me. At last I'll wreck my vengeance."

The pieces of Gignilliat's body are now lying in state on a pile of old test papers in Tate hall. The funeral has been slated for Sunday when Gignilliat will be quietly interred in an ink well.

Sunrise Over Grand Canyon



Icy wind-knives cut the pre-dawn darkness, and

Early risers brave its piercing blast

To peer expectantly eastward over the canyon's rim

Suspense! At what enchanted moment will the sunmaids

Start their upward dance into the sky?

There . . . see how the light comes through the mist, throwing

Long purple shadows of age-old canyon castles

Against the rust and blue of striped mile high walls.

And then the sunmaids dance in countless number along

Their golden path . . . and pause, joining hands

In heavenly halo about a puffy cloud.

Faster and faster they fly and swing the shadows

Down below and light the million palaces of stone.

What man beholds this spectacle and dares to say,

"There is no God?" For those who know still wonder

"What is man that Thou art mindful of him?"

—Manita Bond

Her Name Was Betsy Hopkins

By PONT RILEY

The other day I was rummaging through some past issues of the *Wesleyan*. Although I'm fond of leisurely looking through old *Wesleyans* and *Veterropts* just for curiosity's sake, this time I was rummaging with a purpose. I wanted to find out about someone.

They say when she was at Wesleyan that not only was she "one of the more brilliant stars of Dr. Gin's creative writing lab," but also that she held the "Dubious distinction of being Wesleyan's most frequently campused and restricted girl."¹ She also made the statement, "Some of my nicest relatives are reactionaries."² Her name was Betsy Hopkins.

Betsy Hopkins could write. She had the magical power to make words behave just the way she wanted them to. With a few picturesque phrases and characterizing words she could paint pictures that had depth and color and create people who were warm and alive. She had the ability to make others see a little bit more of what went on around them and perhaps discover in other people a bit of themselves.

Betsy Hopkins liked music. Although I've never met her, I feel I can say this because there was mention of music in so much of her work. She wrote in 1945 a prize-winning essay entitled "Jam Session." From this selection and others such as "The Pawn Shop" (1947), "Margaret's Story" (1948), and "Saturday Night" (1948) we can assume that she knew about the power of music. In simple, yet vividly descriptive words, she wove spells until it was almost possible to hear the music and feel the effect it had on her characters.

Betsy Hopkins liked people. She liked them just because they were people. With great feeling she told of their joys and sorrows, their hopes and dreams, and their love for each other. We can sincerely sympathize with the cold lonely people appearing in "Twas the Night Before Christmas" (1945) who found the "inside of Christmas" in the Majestic Cafe.

1. *The Wesleyan*, June 1947. p. VII.

2. *Ibid.*

Her "Oliver" (1946) is a person we all long to meet—someone who knew how to enjoy life just because he loved people—and in turn helped us. Then there was George ("The Departure of George," 1946) who spent the baby's money and couldn't bear to face his Lessie because he had disappointed her so. The characters are real people—they have real feelings. We know this because they awake within us the same feelings our fellow humans do.

Betsy Hopkins also is capable of arousing in us righteous indignation at the injustice of racial discrimination. We, too, hope that "Some Day" (South Tomorrow Issue, 1947) the problem can be peaceably solved and that all people can live together in harmony. The same idea is reflected in "The Party" (1949) which describe the futile efforts of Chinese children to have a Halloween Party.

Along with her ability to use the right word and to create characters that were warm and alive, Betsy Hopkins had another quality which is necessary for effective writing—a sense of humor. Light and gay little phrases or a new twist with words give reason to believe that she knew how to laugh. She also knew how to make others laugh. For example "Who Killed Dr. Gin" (1947) which is reprinted in this issue is written in such a hilarious style that no one could fail to recognize a strong sense of humor. This selection, I believe will be appreciated by all Wesleyannes, especially those who have survived a Shakespeare class! (It is printed in memoriam of those who succumbed!)

Betsy Hopkins is now Mrs. Marshall Lochridge. She has just had her first book, *Blue River*, published. In it are more people—descendants of those characters who appeared in the *Wesleyan* many years ago. It gives us something to think about—who knows what "genius may be budding in our midst?" It also should make us pause—perhaps there's more here, at Wesleyan, than we realize. Opportunities passed by, words spoken in haste—or not at all, idle hours spent in useless complaining—we'll not have another chance soon to grow so much. Perhaps—and here I take the risk of sounding pedantic—it wouldn't harm us to take this former *Wesleyan* editor's advice. "Patience," says Betsy Hopkins Lochridge, "I learned at Wesleyan—in Dr. Gin's writing lab. That's more than talent or intellect, the quality which makes a writer."³ Quite possibly it could make a student too.

3. Betsy Hopkins Lochridge, a letter to Dr. Gossett.

Autumn

*Autumn, that saturnalian season of the year,
When Mother Nature clothes her blithesome children
In brilliant reds, vibrant oranges, and gay yellows
For the gay festivities of the coming weeks.
Autumn, that wondrous season of the year,
When life, vivid and intense,
Takes one more fling
Before the oncoming deadness of winter.*

*Autumn, that enervating season of the year,
When a certain briskness of air
Permeates the inner being
To bring a rebirth of energy.
Autumn, that miraculous season of the year,
When God's gift of the wondrous Indian Summer
Fills the senses of His creature, man,
Turning him to thoughts of the magnificent earth.*

Marcia Kelly

Dust

*On, on falls the dust.
It piles itself upon the unused stair
And the hues of a once-bright carpet.
It coats the windows with a fine sheet
Obliterating the sunlight.
The smiling portrait of a child becomes sad.
The gilt edges of the book gleam no more.
The rich grain of the desk is obscured, and
The withered rose crumbles, falls and, at last, succumbs
To the dust,
the ever
falling
dust.
It falls like rain in the musty rooms.*

*The stunted sunlight catches the dancing particles
 And the dingy scarlet of the drapes.
 Each step brings a tiny cloud rising from the floor.
 The pink silk lampshade is now dusty rose.
 I touch it and draw my hand away, leaving prints.*

*The flowers upon the china peep out as through a fog.
 The crystal that once made spectrum upon the walls
 Gleams no more.*

Linen

crumbles

in my hand.

*It covers like snow the blue comfort on the bed.
 The silver brush is dingy with tarnish.
 The lacy curtains hang limp and ragged,
 And crumbled, yellow plants droop from blue bowls.
 In the corners hang spider webs,
 Their intricate patterns accentuating the dust.
 A child's doll lies, faded, upon the floor.
 Its silken dress ribboned by the moths.
 A wan sun penetrates the gloom.*

And

the dust

falls.

*On, on it falls, through the years, always falling.
 It covers, rots, ruins and at last, removes
 The brilliant colors of the carpet, the scarlet drapes,
 The dancing sunlight, a laughing child.
 It covers, ruins a house that was once full,
 A house where love and happiness abounded.
 It fills the air in every room
 With chilling dust, decay, ruin and death.
 It fills until everything is empty, inch by dusty inch.*

The

dust

falls;

forever dust.

Ann Bell

Jazz Beat

By BETTIE WILLSON

Introduction

ANYTHING GOES

*In olden days a glimpse of stocking
Was looked on as something shocking,
Now heaven knows,
Anything goes.
Good authors too who once knew better words
Now only use four letter words, writing prose,
Anything goes.
The world has gone mad today,
And good's bad today,
And black's white today,
And day's night today,—
When most guys today
That women prize today,
Are just silly gigolos—
So, though I'm not a great romancer,
I know that you're bound to answer
When I propose,
Anything goes.*

COLE PORTER

In the nineteen-twenties, Puritanism roused herself, bobbed her hair, put on powder and paint and went out to play. She had worried her young head over ideals and morals and platitudes and watched them desert her, one by one, in the cold light of reality; and now she was going to have a good time, and the devil take the hindmost. And, she did. Gertrude Stein christened her with a new name—The Lost Generation—and she flaunted it impudently in the faces of her elders and made bathtub gin and played mahjong and learned to dance the Charleston. She had a wonderful time but,—always the voice of a disturbed conscience whispered demandingly in her ear.

She tried to shake it off by spending a gay season on the Riviera. She'd done her part, hadn't she? She'd fought a war, hadn't she? Then, that was that. She was going to have a very good time, and she launched her new campaign—she went to a big, bright party.

Part I

OVER THERE

Over there! Over there!

*Send the word, send the word
Over there.*

*That the Yanks are coming,
The Yanks are coming,
The drums drum-drumming everywhere.
So prepare. Say a prayer.
Send the word, send the word
Over there.*

*That the Yanks are coming,
The Yanks are Coming,
It will soon be over
Over there.*

IRVING BERLIN

There was a war in 1916 and that's as good a place as any to begin this story of revolution. President Woodrow Wilson promised that this one would be the last. "The War to end all wars," he said. So, Puritanism, like the rest of her contemporaries, draped herself in the American flag and went out to make the world safe for democracy. The Golden Age was at hand.

Two years later, the Germans were still fighting, the French had double-crossed their allies and Puritanism was bone tired. She had been promised a crusade and gotten a war instead, and war was not pretty. War was mud and cooties and hunger and cold and death and—worse still—life. And, war did things to the living.

"If the war hurt them—they became numb and stopped thinking and believing. It was not their war any more. If love died they stopped believing in love too and began believing in sex. If everything collapsed and they were left with nothing, that was all right, too. They began to believe in nothing."¹

Part II

WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME

When Johnny comes marching home again,

Hooray, hooray.

We'll give him a hardy welcome then,

Hooray, hooray.

The men will cheer and the boys will shout,

The ladies, they will all turn out,

And we'll all feel gay when

Johnny comes marching home.

Puritanism had flourished in an era of complacency when America had the answer to everything—the reform era. She had been nurtured and protected from the world by loving parents who could remember with happiness an age of grace and order. But, there was no order in this post-war world. Puritanism was baptized in chaos at Verdun and Belleau Wood and the horror would stay with her for all time.

¹Aldridge, John W., *After the Lost Generation*, p. 300"

The experience had been violent and terrible. And when, at, last, the war was over and she came home, slightly bewildered at the restlessness within her, it was no longer enough to go to Aunt Sara's for the summer or spend a Sunday afternoon reading Tennyson.

Part III

HOW YA GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN ON Th' FARM?

How ya gonna keep 'em down on th' farm,

After they've seen Paris?

How ya gonna keep 'em away from Broadway,

Jazzin' around, paintin' th' town?

Puritanism left home, migrating to the big cities of the East, and found there the 'glittering exterior' which F. Scott Fitzgerald was later to describe so well in *The Great Gatsby*. She bought a chromium-laden automobile and learned to drive it, enjoying the thrill of making sharp curves at sixty miles an hour. She talked too much and too fast and developed a taste for liquor—straight—and because of Prohibition—bootlegged. And, she got rich. Honestly, perhaps—it didn't really matter. Money was the shield and sword which held at bay any force which might shatter the shell which protected her from reality and responsibility. Fitzgerald named her Daisy and married her to Tom Buchanan.

"They were careless people, Tom and Daisy—they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made . . ."²

Part IV

THE CHARLESTON

Charleston! Charleston!

Made in Carolina.

Some dance. Some prance.

I'll say,

There's nothing finer than the

Charleston! Charleston!

Cecil Mack and Jimmy Johnson

As an effective insurance against further disenchantment, Puritanism put her faith in anything which was vitally unimportant. She read the daily journal which had learned, early in the game, the wisdom of turning from war news and peace treaties to the newer and more interesting society scandals. She liked violence with her morning coffee and she got it. She followed the Scopes' Trial with morbid fascination—making lucrative jokes about Darrow's puns on evolution. She thought it absolutely 'wild' when people climbed flag poles and sat atop them for days for the stupidity of it. She discussed Freud. She went to football games and saw a college crowd who wore coonskin coats and played mandolins.

She listened to Rudy Vallee sing "My Time Is Your Time" through his nasal passages and turned off the radio when the news came on. She attended movies avidly. Clara Bow had 'It' and taught her how to dress,

²Fitzgerald, F. Scott, *The Great Gatsby*, p. 300.

and walk and gesture and dance. When Rudolph Valentino galloped across the sand dunes in "The Sheik," she swooned with gusto and returned, again and again, to see the same picture.

She even took up art—dadaism, futurism and primitivism. She read Sinclair Lewis' satirical criticisms of American life only because someone had told her that they were extremely amusing. She was 'mad about' Fitzgerald and Dos Passos and Hemingway—she could walk away from them whenever she chose. They were the voices of her conscience, the artists and authors who realized most acutely what was happening, although many of them didn't know why. Some of them, like Fitzgerald, were swayed by it and believed in it and, some of them, like Hemingway, had returned from the war too sick with disillusionment to believe in anything. For a decade, she had built her house on sand and, when the rains came and the winds blew and beat about that house—it fell. It was then that she learned the lesson which her heart had known all along. She found—as had the fallen angel—that thoughtless rebellion always resulted in a bondage more severe than the bond of any law which she had broken. The Depression Years followed and want gave her time to think. Ten years of famine succeeded the ten years of plenty. The big, bright party was over.

Conclusion

JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS

It was just one of those things,

Just one of those crazy flings.

One of those bells that now and then rings,

Just one of those things.

If we'd thought a bit of the end of it

When we started painting the town,

We'd have been aware that this wild affair

Was too hot not to cool down.

So good-bye, dear, and amen.

Here's hoping we meet now and then,

It was great fun,

But it was just one of those things.

Cole Porter

At times it is hard to find a saving grace in this generation. She was lost because it was easier to be lost than to bear responsibility. It was easier to escape than to face reality. At its most intense—the expression of The Lost Generation was neither dramatic nor forced. It was a matter of fact—something to be either accepted or escaped. The majority escaped with a desperation few generations have known. There was a complete lack of gentleness connected with this decade of escape. Every emotion, every action, every motivation was violent and tortured. Even the final acceptance of her own failure was a desperate and bitter thing. After the big party—acceptance. And, after acceptance—the long hangover—and the sour taste of the morning after.

The Tracks

BY HELEN POOLE

An old railroad siding ran through some woods behind our house where we used to play as children, and, on one side of the steep embankment that supported the tracks, you could stand and see trees and grass and hills for about a mile or so. In the summer, the wiry grass that grew on that side of the bank became yellow and dry, making a perfect toboggan run for our cardboardbox sleds. We spent many happy days climbing the steep bank and tumbling down again, tearing clothes and skin on the hidden briars.

The bank on the opposite side of the tracks was like the entrance to a different world, strange and mysterious to us, where the sun never seemed to penetrate and vapors rose from cracks in a covered tunnel. The embankment was steep and treacherous, but the crude steps made from railroad ties, although they were spaced for much longer strides than ours, made the descent a little easier.

At the bottom of the bank was a small stretch of marshy land enclosed by trees where grass and vines grew luxuriantly and covered pools of stagnant water.

There were wild violets and huge fuzzy "cat-tails" in the marsh, which were even more desirable to us since we had been forbidden to cross the tracks or even go near that side of the bank. Being so far from home gave us a delicious thrill of adventure. And just a few yards further through the trees lay the festering slums of "nigger-town." We could almost see the brown boards of the decayed houses where children swarmed and dogs yapped loudly. From some of the chimneys pungent wood smoke drifted and mingled with the marsh vapors.

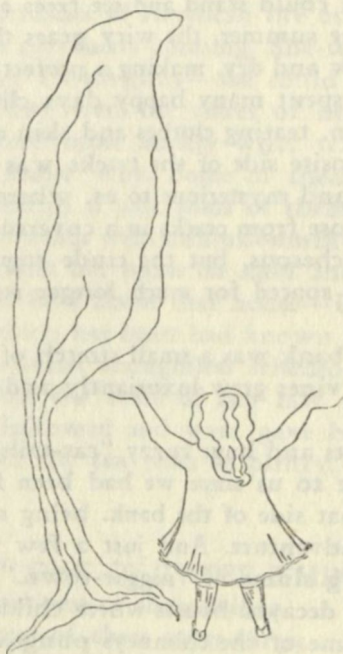
That was probably where he came from—the colored boy on the tracks that day. He must have come up the path of railroad ties and sat down on the tracks to rest. Nobody really knew for sure. The engineer didn't even see him until it was too late to stop.

We saw the ambulance when it came, and we saw the young man in a stiff white suit step out, cross our yard and walk calmly through the trees toward the tracks. We followed him breathlessly, afraid of what we might find, yet eager to see everything.

We watched while the doctor checked for a heartbeat under the torn shirt. The boy wasn't horribly maimed as might be expected, but he looked crumpled and boneless lying there on the ambulance stretcher. The doctor stood up and lit a cigarette. "Fine place to take a nap," we heard him say to the engineer. Just then the figure on the stretcher grimaced and uttered a last startled moan. A thin rain started to sift down as the doctor covered the boy's body with a sheet.

That afternoon when they had all gone, we went back to the tracks and found remnants of his last meal—some dried beef and a milk carton. Our curiosity had taken us far enough. We glanced toward the far side of the tracks where the wood-fires were still burning and hurried home in the falling rain.

A Child's Secret



What secrets are held in childhood . . .

what mysteries locked in the clean, wet smells of dew on earth and sky
and dewdrops rainbowing fire in the rays of an early sun?

What knowledge is sealed in each curve of meadow arched against the
sky like waves of a lime-green sea?

They're there . . .

hidden, but not forgotten . . .

sensed by a giddy joy when the wind caresses a face
or when a bare foot touches the naked grass.

It's trickled in the crystal percussion of a running stream . . .

whispered in the arms of a friendly tree . . .

all shade, all softness.

It scurries in the long spare shapes of crayfish . . .

silent green shadows that glide among the rocks and under the leaves,
close to the whitened sand . . .

and it shouts with the delightful sting of water . . . cold against bare legs.

A child's rhythm . . . giddy . . .

*like climbing to the top of an old oak tree and diving to the depths
of a murky pond . . .*

*yet again slow . . . quiet . . . like sleep in the hayloft with rain upon
the roof . . .*

But a man's a man . . . and forgets . . .

remembering only with a splash of color

as a bluejay strikes the air

or the whistling call of a bird that's lost its mate.

He is lost in a fading sun

and never again will it come in its sweetness and pain

and never again will he hear the stir of the voice inside that

whispered to him as a child,

*"Run, run . . . the wind's up . . . the trees bend . . . and bare toes long
for the feel of meadow grass . . ."*

—By Charlye Wiggins—

When the Curtain Falls

Autumn comes like the drama just ended,

her leaves are the whispered skirts fallen onto the crease of our
program so that we see not the actors' names nor hear them take
their cues, behind the dark curtain that veils the lone corridor.

Autumn lives in the glow of footlights, fading with dawn, while
sitting in front of the river we pour another glass of wine into
our glasses and toast to the morrow. The song on the lips of a
rattled beggar hobbling down between the streets is a song of
life and the echoes of melody bat themselves out against the
surrounding buildings.

We are Autumn ourselves, our tears, our joy, our toil we loose from
their chains. The summer is yet loud in our ears; it was a glory
passed like the creature by the sea, who deserting its home to
wander on the sands has left behind an empty shell, a castle now
where mice play.

Our Autumn finds her theatre where we touched the velvet robes of Hamlet,
upon the boards a sedulous pretender plays another role. She is
the swarthy cleaning woman, hair in face and broom in hand, who
sweeps away the still remnants of a past, the paper and cigarette
stubs, to make room for a new scene.

But we are the dim mornings, and our streets become Earth
preparing for a new drama. We are the glories gone; we
are the silent rain filtering through the trees.

Harriet Hope

Yo Recuerdo Siempre

... I'll Remember Always

BY LULEEN SANDEFUR

This story is true. I do not know the beginning nor the end, but the tiny fraction I do know keeps pushing its way into my mind, and try as I may, I can't forget it. I'll remember always . . .

The first time I passed it, I hardly noticed the tiny thatched-roof hut sitting in a lonely, deserted cornfield about 20 ft. from the dirt road which led to Omaja, Cuba, where I was to spend the summer. I presumed it to be some little storage shack used by the nearby farmers, although I wondered what could be stored in so tiny a hut. And so I dismissed it from my thoughts until some time later when I learned this story:

In this filthy little lean-to hut live four children all alone. There are two girls and two boys ranging in age from 5-12, all dirty, hungry, love-starved children who look as though they would be cute and adorable if you could see beneath the layer of dirt, or had the chance to dress them in decent clothing and comb their curly hair, matted with sand and tiny sores. The two boys never wore any clothing but the girls wore ragged, faded little cotton dresses several sizes too large for their frail bodies.

About a year ago the mother of these children died, and since then their father has gone to live with someone else leaving them to get along as best they can. They eke out a meager existence from day to day by begging or stealing the food they eat; their father was placed in jail this summer because his children were caught stealing a chicken to keep from starving.

On my first visit to their hut the sight I beheld was appalling; a sickening feeling crept over me. "Home" for these four children is a little cubby-hole made by some boards leaning against a thatched-roof supported by four little posts. The hut is not nearly so big as your dormitory room, and is so low you could not stand in it without stooping slightly. A rusty barbed wire fence and a field of corn separate it from the little dirt road; and passers-by often see four little heads peering out between the golden stalks of corn through the jagged fence. They look eagerly as people pass, hoping for—anything.

Dana, the eight year old girl has taken most of the responsibility of caring for the other three. But Dana was stricken with typhoid fever while I was there and she wasn't expected to live. She had no one who cared enough to send for a doctor, especially since there was not one in her community, so one of the men at the mission station went to give the child a shot of penicillin. Dana was lying in the hut on a pair of rusty springs covered only with some dirty gunny sacks, and no one was there to care for her. Have you ever had an eight year old look you in the eye and say in all sincerity that she wishes she had died instead of her mother?

That's the story. The end can't be written because this story is still being lived by four lonely little children in a deserted corn field in the heart of Cuba. As I visited them just before leaving for the states they each hugged me tightly, and Dana whispered, "Un buen viaje."

I won't forget, Dana. I'll remember always . . .

Fall: Here and There

Here the too-long summer lingers—
the days are hot—sticky still . . .

*There the frost is deep, breezes blow
cool and winter hastens . . .*

Here the days are brown and burned—
the brilliance stays away—the ghinko
trees lack their pots of gold . . .

*There the crisp cool brings the color—
red, gold, burnt amber—highlight the
hills and dapple mountain streams . . .*

Here the men and dogs hunt—'tis sport to kill . . .
There the deer creep closer—man brings food . . .

*There . . . and how my heart longs for mountain peaks,
deep in snow, gleaming white, watching, waiting . . .*

Here . . . But I must work—the task at hand requires
restraint, not impatient longings . . .

*Yet I can wait . . . here . . . til one day I'll find Fall . . .
waiting for me . . .*

There . . . in Yellowstone.

A New Year

BY CARMEN MOORE

"Everything's going to work out. I know it is. It'll be different this year." Muttering these words to herself, she climbed the stairs to third floor. She was alone. No one had come along with her this year. She had told her mother and dad that she was grown now. She had been to college one year, and she knew how to take care of herself. There had been no need for them to make the long trip. She had come alone.

All she carried with her was one piece of luggage. She had shipped two trunks last week, and had left her study lamp, her stuffed animals, her banners, and her bulletin board in summer storage. Everything would be waiting for her when she stepped into her room. Everything, that is, but her roommate. But, no, she would not think of that now. There was no need to worry. It was going to be different this year.

She was alone. It was dinnertime; all the early arrivals had gone to the dining hall. She hastened her pace as she walked down the dark, deserted hall. She saw that most of her classmates had arrived; she saw their rooms—boxes, dresses, suitcases, and pictures scattered in all directions. She stopped at one door and looked at the two names on it. Sue and Carol. How glad she was that she was not rooming near them. They smoked too much. Their room was always filled with smoke and with laughing girls—talking first about the Sigma Chi fraternity at Auburn and then about the Phi Delt at Tech. They never studied—just talked, laughed, and smoked. She sighed and continued her long walk.

And then to her right, she saw Jean's room. Wonder who she was rooming with this year? Who could stand to room with Jean? Singing-singing constantly—morning, noon, and night. Class songs! How silly! It was fine once in a while, but . . . When she wasn't singing, she was probably making up new class songs in her sleep. Jean was an odd person!

She saw Linda's room. She turned up her nose. Linda was nice to everyone; because she wanted to be the "big wheel" in the class, but she really didn't like anyone. And it was certain that nobody—just nobody—liked her. Sure, they voted for Linda. Could a person do otherwise? Linda made herself so known that when it came time for elections no one could think of another person to vote for. Naturally, Linda was elected. Well, *she* didn't like Linda. Maybe *she* was just jealous—jealous that she could not be everybody's "big pal."

And there it was! Waiting for her—her room—her very own room! And beside the door were her two trunks. She smiled to herself as she opened the door. This year it was going to be different. Funny, it looked the same way as it had looked last year, except the room was yellow, instead of blue. The beds were the same; the dresser was the same, and the desk was the same. Only she wasn't the same. Last year she had been so eager to meet her roommate—to be friends with her. But she and Jo hadn't been friends. She had tried; maybe she had tried too hard. Jo was full of life—always bubbling with excitement over any little event. Jo was always giggling—always dancing around the room to that crazy "jig" music.

She had tried to be interested in hearing about Jo's date with Tom, Dick, and Harry. She had tried to help Jo pass her French. She had tried to hold her temper when she found the room resembling a department store after "dollar day." She had even tried to give advice to her roommate—advice which Jo needed—on how to study, how to display a little dignity, and how to keep her clothes neat. She had tried. She had tried to forget the hurt when Jo left her listening to Brahms's records and joined the other girls at bridge sessions, surprise parties, and midnight snacks. She had remained in the solitude of her room those long nights. Sometimes she read—Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Thoreau's *Walden* were her favorites. Other times she sat at her desk and gazed into the darkness of the night. Sometimes she had joined the other girls, but she usually felt so miserable with them that she soon crept back to her hiding place. For after she said, "Hello, how are you? Wasn't that test hard?" she could think of nothing else to say—nothing witty—nothing funny—nothing.

This time a year ago she had been excited about meeting her roommate. Now she had no roommate. At the end of second semester the girls had chosen new ones for this year. Jo had told her—had told her very tactfully—that she and Libby were planning to room together. Not knowing where to turn or whom to ask, she had remained silent—hoping that perhaps one of the girls might come to her. Thus she was here this year alone.

She heard voices. Oh, they were coming back from dinner. She ran to the mirror and smiled reassuringly to herself. She could hear the blend of voices.

"Oh, it was such a great summer, but it's so good to be back."

"I missed y'all so much. When I saw you standing in the room, I was so thrilled!"

"Wonder when Jane'll get here? I'm dying to see her."

"Wish my roommate would hurry. Did you know she's pinned?"

The steps grew closer and closer; the voices grew louder and louder. She was glad that she had left the door open; otherwise, they wouldn't know that she had come. And she couldn't—she wouldn't—go out and say, "Hello," to them first!

The steps grew closer and closer; the voices grew louder and louder. She stood at the dresser and looked into the mirror. Her face was glowing. Oh, she couldn't wait to see the girls. It was wonderful to be back with them. It was good to be a part of a grand class, to be among all the girls.

The steps grew closer; the voices grew louder. She would go tell them "Hello." She turned from the mirror and started across the room. A wide smile was on her face. They were coming; she knew that they would stop and talk with her.

The girls walked by—talking and laughing. They did not glance in her direction. She stood in the center of the room. How long she stood there, she did not know.

She laughed bitterly. "Everything's going to work out. I know it is. It will be different this year."

She walked slowly to the door and closed it. She started unpacking her clothes. She was alone.

Night

By JANE POWERS

I didn't want to go, but the other girls badgered me into it. Lin, my "steady," was out of town for a couple of weeks. He had told me to go ahead and date while he was gone, but I couldn't do that, because I was so much in love with Lin. So I had turned down several dates and caught up on some reading and sewing to pass the time.

Then one situation that I couldn't get out of came along. Dot was having a slumber party, and all the other girls had dates before the party. Dot was going with Bo, so she convinced his best friend, Roy, that I would love to go with him. Rather than sit around all night waiting for the girls to come in, I reluctantly agreed to date Roy. Now, don't get me wrong. Roy is a very nice boy—tall, and not bad looking. Under different circumstances, I'd have gladly agreed to date him. But there I was, in love with Lin, blind to any other boy.

The evening began like many others. It was hot as blazes that summer, and since the city pool was open at night, it was a favorite hangout for our gang. We decided not to swim, but instead, fed the juke box a few nickels and jitterbugged a little. Pretty soon that got old, and we cooked up something "different" to do. There was a fire lookout station on a high hill near town, manned by an old fellow who was mad at the world—especially the younger generation.

We drove up the winding road to the hilltop and coasted into the yard with our lights out. The old man's house was dark and the tower's lacy skeleton loomed above us, black against the moonlit sky. We sneaked out of the car and tiptoed over to the tower. Suddenly, the absurdity of the situation struck Roy and me, so we had a fit of suppressed giggling.

"Shhhh," said Bo. "I hear the old fellow has a shot gun and isn't afraid to use it!"

Instead of quieting us, he only made it worse. Roy whispered something about "... picking buckshot out of each other!" and we were off again.

Stealthily climbing the metal steps, I glanced down, but only for a moment. Heights have always made me dizzy, and the ground looked miles away, black and unyielding. As we neared the top, Roy clutched my hand and whispered, "Look!"

I gasped as I looked . . . and looked . . . and looked. It was very late at night, and a peaceful quiet hung over the sleeping countryside. The moonlight made a fairyland of all the familiar landmarks I recognized. Far to the south, I could see the stop light on Main Street blinking its warning to late tourists. Headlights flickered up and down the highway, and the occasional roar of a transfer truck reached our ears. The radio tower, tall and spindly, rose from a nearby field.

An airplane droned far above, its lights saying a friendly hello through the still night. To the north and east, dark woods and silvery meadows spread under my gaze. A fox barked and a solitary hound cried his loneliness to the listening moon.

I turned my face again toward town. Ah, there it was. A coppery gleam, a shining cross; there was my church. It rose high above the scene, with its spire pointing to the God who had made this lovely midnight scene.

Dot and Bo hadn't even noticed our preoccupation with the view. They were a few steps below us, laughing and whispering. I think I could have stayed all night, just looking, but they soon were tired of the adventure. We again crept away, but this time it was the other couple who made the noise. Roy and I sat in companionable silence all the way home.

That's all there was to it. Lin came home and I fell more in love with him than ever. But whenever I saw Roy, our glances met in a secret smile, as we remembered that magic night.

It happened years ago. I haven't seen Roy, Dot and Bo for some time. I'd probably never think of them, if they hadn't been a part of the night that I can't forget. When the children get too noisy, or the dinner burns, I close my eyes and recapture a little of the peaceful calm that filled me then. And I smile at Lin, who never understands how I keep from losing my temper.

Matilda Was A People

By CHARLYE WIGGINS

She thought she was Cleopatra reincarnated, and after all, her thinking so was the important thing. But actually, she was just a little stray cat who believed she was People . . . and to us, whom she adopted, she *was* a person, revealing a warm vibrant, and delightful personality. And it was this little quirk of hers . . . this wanting to be human . . . that shaped her whole life.

She took our family in when she was a scraggly, scrawny tuft of kitten with her round blue eyes just opened. We named her Matilda, which means *mighty battle maiden*, in hopes that she would grow up from her Cinderella-youth to become a Princess of Cats.

At first, we had to feed her from a doll's baby bottle, for she was too teeny to lap milk from a saucer. But Matilda thrived, and she grew and grew and grew . . . just like Topsy. Although she didn't show her human qualities while still a kitten, nevertheless she was a bundle of live-wire activity and mischief.

One of her favorite sports was to gallop down the long hallway at top speed down on the throw-rug in mid-hall, and slide wide-eyed the rest of the way. Then she would rise gracefully, groom her rumpled coat as best an adolescent kitten knows how, purse her mouth into a little round O and walk primly away, leaving the rug in its tell-tale position by the bedroom door.

During her kitten-hood, she also loved to wrestle with our dog, Bingo, a little black and white fox terrier. Matilda would "hide" in the garden behind a clump of flowers with her little pansy face peeping out, waiting for Bingo to amble by. Then she would gallop out sidewise from her hidey-hole to lock both furry arms around the old dog's neck, swaying Bingo back and forth.

Months went by, and our kitten became a cat. We were never quite sure what color she would turn out to be, for her coloring changed so while she was growing up. But at the last day came when she swapped her coats of many colors for a permanent dress suit. It was very dark, mostly black, with yellow, beige, and darker brown stripes. She always wore a white, V-shaped collar that fit snugly around her chin, and four white gloves, which she kept spotlessly clean.

Then came moonlit nights, suitors, kitten love . . . and kittens, just worlds of kittens. But Matilda never had more than three kits at one time; more than that wasn't respectable, and after all, she had a reputation to uphold.

But the odd part about her mating was, as far as we know, that she chose only one mate for her entire lifetime, and mated with a cat other than Cedric only once. Her mate, Cedric, was a little black cat with white trim, looking as if he constantly wore a tuxedo. Before I knew Cedric, I didn't know that cats also show nationality, but Cedric was the most British-British cat I've ever seen. He always looked as if he had just come from an Explorer's Club meeting, and I almost expected him to whisk out a monocle and perch it on his pink nose. He was the only other cat Matilda enjoyed having around. Sometimes when no one was looking, the two of them used to sit side by side on the front steps and watch the People go by.

Matilda had a definite artistic sense, and she loved beautiful things. She used to listen to music with me whenever I turned on the phonograph. Her favorite composers were Chopin and DeBussy. She would sleep through Beethoven, Rachmaninoff, and the rest, but when she heard the first dreamy notes of Chopin or DeBussy, she would sit up, her eyes half closed in ecstasy, beating out the rhythm with the tip-end of her tail.

As far as music was concerned, Matilda had her dislikes as well as her favorites. She hated, loathed, and despised hillbilly music. If ever I happened to play any while she was in the room, she would make a wry face, get up and leave the room, twitching her tail in a most disgusted manner.

Being a People like she was, Matilda had a passion for sleeping on beds. She adopted my Aunt Ruby's bed as her own and literally took it over. We tried to discourage her, but it was like trying to move Gibraltar to the North Pole.

Her favorite mode of sleeping was under the spread, nestled in the little pocket between the two pillows. The only way we could tell she was there was the very slight bulge in the pillow line. We never let on to her that we knew about this, for it would have hurt her pride. You see, she thought she had us outsmarted, and so we'd play the little dialogue game of "Where-is-Matilda? I-haven't-seen-her-all-afternoon."

Sometimes the family wondered just how far Matilda's intelligence reached, for her mind worked swiftly and almost too logically for a cat. There was one chair in the house that was constantly fought for by Matilda and my aunt. They both loved it and considered it their favorite chair. Well, one night after supper, the family was gathered in the living room when Matilda strolled in. She had that now-for-a-snooze look on her face, and she was heading for *HER* chair. There was just one catch; Aunt Ruby was in it. Matilda looked at Ruby, and Ruby looked at Matilda. Something had to be done.

To hide her indecision as to what to do next, Matilda dropped down on the rug and began washing herself. She bathed and she bathed and she bathed. And while she bathed, she thought and she thought and she thought. Every now and then, she'd look up to see what Ruby was doing, and then she'd groom some more. Finally, with a hint of a smile around her whiskers, she walked to the door and asked to be let outside. Ruby put down her magazine and went to open the door. With a sassy twitch of her tail, Matilda sprang for the chair and settled herself comfortably in it with a little self-satisfied smile.

However, there was one very strange thing about this cat of ours. She never spoke; she never meowed; she seldom purred; and she only cried out when she was in danger, or growled when she had had enough of our teasing. I think the basis of this was that she resented being a cat. After all, she had lived with human beings ever since she was two weeks old, and we were the only family she remembered. She just couldn't figure out why she was different. Matilda understood the English language perfectly, but it worried her that she couldn't speak it, no matter how hard she tried, so she just didn't say anything. Once in a while she forgot herself and purred, but when she realized what she was doing, she stopped abruptly and left the room.

To call her a cat to her face was the prime insult. Her ears flattened against her sleek head, and her eyes grew large and very dark. She would slink dejected into the kitchen, sit down in the middle of the floor and rock back and forth, real live tears glistening in her eyes.

Matilda's dry wit never ceased to amuse the whole neighborhood. She was particularly fond of practical jokes which she played on family, friends, and especially dogs. Her favorite occupation was to lie in wait for the neighborhood dogs behind a clump of bushes by the sidewalk. When they came trotting gaily by, minding their own business, Miss Kitch, as we often called her, would flash out a furry arm and slap them on their plump rears, sending them flying up the streets, tails tucked and barks yelped back over their shoulders.

But as with all good things, there's an end somewhere. One day early in November, 1954, a known killer-cat of the neighborhood attacked Matilda while she was lying in the backyard swing and wounded her critically. Three days later, Matilda died of the wounds. We buried her in the garden and marked the little grave with a tiny marble tombstone.

She was just a cat, but unique in all the world to those of us who loved her. In our eyes, she was stamped with the mark of immortality, for Matilda desperately wanted to be a People. To us she is, she was, and perhaps she will be.

After Forest Fire

*The call of the loon
slithers through the living graveyard
on its belly.
The blackened trees stand
waiting for Judgment Day,
dreaming longingly of the Phoenix.
Tarantulaic clouds are crawled by the wind
and sit on each other in piles
above the forest . . . a metallic thunder
and the taste of tinfoil;
rain snakes fall from the skies,
hissing petulantly as they strike.
Too late. No Frankensteinian currents
can spark the corpse.
And the call of the loon
slithers through the living graveyard
on its cold wet belly.*

—Polly Rodieck

Autumn as Seen Beside Foster Lake

Scene:

*Before me spreads a khaki sea,
Above yawns an azure sky,
Breeze-blown, the surface ripples widen out
And angered by unwelcome wind; the jeweled leaves
Complain, then sigh.
Across that tan sea dwell a pious people—
Stern, straight-limbed, Puritan trees,
Yet beneath their always praying arms
Their children, gaily clothed, romp
In October's breeze.*

Meditation:

*Alone here on my private isle,
Isolated by sky and sand and sea,
I look upon the ripening autumn's tender scene
And know that I must make a prayer
To thank the God who willed these splendors be.*

Claire Hammond

Pontifically Speaking...

BY PONT RILEY

"Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary . . ." Yessir, that's me—only I'm pounding, not pondering, and it's not dreary although it is midnight. In fact, it's a lovely night—clear and crisp with the first hints of autumn in the air. It's similar to a summer night in Yellowstone, except there it gets much colder—frequently below freezing. We always managed to choose those nights for our camping trips, and someone would always get the bright idea that I ought to be ducked in Nez Perce creek—Nasty Nez, we called it. But that's something I'd best save for later. You be sure to remind me to tell about it sometime. Anyway—where was I? Oh, yes, I nearly forgot what I wanted to tell you. First though, I must ask you to bear with me—I am weary, it is midnight, and I've just finished typing most of the copy for this issue of the *Wesleyan*. Besides that, the dates have been set for the *Veterropt* copy deadlines, and I'm panicked!

Anyway—and maybe I can get said what I want to say this time without too many digressions—a terrible habit of mine—what I want to tell you is this: Please, Please, a thousand times please, won't you kindly contribute material to this magazine? Last night I was looking through some old issues of the *Wesleyan*, and I found them perfectly fascinating. Of course their age and the ghostly qualities may have had something to do with it. Then too, it was fun to see in print the names of those people we occasionally hear Dr. Gin or somebody mention. Anyway, and this is IT, if something doesn't happen pretty soon the *Wesleyan* will die. Its rut is rapidly becoming a grave, and if it doesn't get a transfusion soon, I can see no hope for it. I'd hate to have to start printing compositions my high school seniors write, but at least then the grammatical errors might amuse you. Besides, I'm sure you don't want any more of this stuff. By the way, how have you managed to stand it this far? So—and don't say I didn't warn you—either you contribute to YOUR magazine, or you get more of this—and as a last resort, high school senior's themes.

In closing—a cry for help. If anyone can explain Charlye Wiggins' poetry to me I'd certainly appreciate it. I room with her, and since I'm supposed to know about things like that, I'm embarrassed to ask her myself.

Also please don't tell Nan McClellan about this when she gets back from Atlanta. I've enjoyed working on the *Wesleyan*—the free meal at the Publications Banquet is so good—and I'd hate to lose out my senior year. Oh, I almost forgot, if Nan does fire me, I'll still have the *Veterropt* to console me, won't I?